

# Nehru, Sheikh responsible for creation of LoC: Khatana

NC-Cong, PDP willingly left Loran, Mandi, other areas undeveloped: BJP leader

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
**POONCH:** Taking a dig at the Congress and National Conference (NC), senior BJP leader and Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Gulam Ali Khatana on Sunday said that Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah were responsible for the creation of Line of Control (LoC) in J&K as these leaders had vested interests and self-centric plans to enjoy the rule like a prince.



*BJP leader, Gulam Ali Khatana addressing a public meeting.*

Addressing a number of closed door and other public meetings in Loran, Mandi and other areas of mountainous Poonch district, Khatana said that Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) is also a part of J&K. "People of PoJK are very much familiar with the developments and progress Jammu and Kashmir has made under the leadership of PM Modi and they are willing to again be part of this

progressive J&K as condition there are not good while prices of essential commodities in PoJK are touching skies," the BJP leader said. He said that as far as developments are concerned Loran and Mandi areas of Poonch have been badly discriminated by the successive governments led by NC, Congress and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). "Had Congress, NC and PDP honest in their rule,

Loran, Mandi and other areas of Poonch might be developed on the pattern of Gulmarg," the BJP leader maintained adding: "BJP has a vision for these areas and big hotels, gondola etc can be thought over for such beautiful places to bring sky changes in tourist footfall which may boost the economy of this area and may also help in lowering the unemployment." Khatana informed that NC

and PDP are working hard on false and fictitious propaganda against BJP for political reasons and by doing so they are keeping the public away from the developmental schemes and welfare measures started by PM Modi led BJP government for the poor and marginalised section of the society. He said that faith of the public on PM Modi is going to give the top leader of our country a third chance to

help the office of PM for taking our nation to new heights of developments and progress so that we may become the third largest economy in the world from the fifth. "Not only India but the entire world will progress under the leadership of PM Modi as his extraordinary and unique ways of leadership is going to help the world to come out from the international problems like pollution, global warming, terrorism, unemployment etc," Gulam Ali Khatana continued.

Prominent among those present on the occasion were Ch. Mohd Ashraf, State Vice President BJP ST Morcha; Shazad Ahmed Khan, State Secretary BJP; Senior Leaders-Lala Manzoor Ahmed lone, Mohd Akram Lone, Ex Sarpanch Pirea Ajaz Tantry and many others including Ex-Sarpanches, Panches and prominent citizens of the area.

# SMVDU Katra ranked in Times Higher Education's Asia and Young University Rank 2024



**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
**KATRA:** In the recent Times Higher Education Asia Ranking 2024 by the prestigious Times Higher Education, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Katra was ranked in 251-300 band. The Asia Ranking 2024 ranking includes 739 universities from 31 territories in Asia in which 91 institutes including SMVDU from India were

included. THE has also released Young University Ranking 2024 in which Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University has been ranked in 201-250th Band. 673 institutes from all over the world were included in this ranking and 55 institutes from India including SMVDU have been given place. In the World University Ranking 2024 released earlier by THE, the university was ranked

801-1000th in the world and was ranked 25th in the India Ranking 2024. SMVDU is among the select institutions of India which are continuously achieving heights in the world rankings. Vice Chancellor of SMVDU, Prof. Pragati Kumar extended best wishes to the university family and inspired them to continue progressing and setting new standards.

# Admin, BDA starts week long cleanliness drive from famous Guldanda meadow of Bhandarwah



*Students and officials diving a cleanliness drive at Bhandarwah.*

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
**BHANDARWAH:** With an aim to make all tourist destinations free from dirt and bio non-degradable material on the directions of DC Doda Harvinder Singh, Bhandarwah Administration along with Bhandarwah Development Authority (BDA) and Municipal Committee Bhandarwah started week-long massive cleanliness drive under "Swatchhata Pakhwada" Campaign from famous Guldanda meadow of Bhandarwah, which has become a favourite destination among tourists thronging across country.

tors not to throw polythene, wrappers and other bio non degradable substances for the sake of environment and to save the natural beauty of high altitude tourist destinations. ADC Bhandarwah Sunil Kumar along with CEO BDA Bal Krishan, Tehsildar Kamalpreet, CEO MC Bhandarwah and joined by students started cleanliness drive by collecting all the wrappers, plastic bottles and other substances from nearly 1 KM area of the Guldanda meadow and the road.

On the sidelines of cleanliness drive, a cultural programme was also presented by students. Bal Krishan CEO BDA said that due to heavy rush of tourists, the environmental condition of famous high altitude meadow Guldanda, Jaie Valley and Padri meadow in Bhandarwah were in bad state as there was wrappers and other bio non degradable garbage everywhere, we took the matter very seriously and beside educating visitors and vendors about cleanliness, we started its cleanliness along with Administration, MC Bhandarwah and others. "We successfully managed

to almost clear the entire meadow from all the bio non degradable substances," CEO added, appealing that "visitors should use dustbins installed at all tourist destinations. "Tourists not only happily participated in cleanliness drive but also requested the visitors present here, not to throw plastic and wrappers in the meadow. They also motivate others to use dustbins," CEO informed, saying that all tourist destination will be cleared from the dirt in coming week.

ADC Bhandarwah Sunil Kumar said that it's our responsibility to keep our tourist destinations neat and clean for the visitors, so that they can get a great memories from this beautiful area. "The initiative has been taken on the directions of DC Doda Harvinder Singh and will continue for one week," ADC added. It is notable to mention here that according to the figures issued by BDA more than 1 lakh tourists visited Bhandarwah since last one and half month as pleasant weather is boosting the tourism in Bhandarwah in a big way.

# Reasi women foster grass made traditional handicrafts

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
**REASI:** The resurgence of traditional handicrafts made from local grasses by rural women in Reasi district of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is a remarkable endeavor that not only preserves cultural heritage but also empowers women economically. These women have skillfully crafted various products such as Chhabadi, Binna, pen stands, laundry bags, dry fruit trays, and decorative items from locally available Babian grass and wild palm.



*A rural woman presenting local grass made item to visiting officer during the visit at rural mart at Karua village in Reasi.*

The products exhibit exceptional durability and quality, leading to high demand in the market. To ensure wider accessibility, the rural women have established sale counters at strategic locations such as Kheral on Reasi-Shiv Khori Road, Katra Chowk, Katra Railway Station, and Karua village. These locations cater to the

influx of tourists and devotees visiting religious sites like the Shree Mata Vaishno Shrine, making the handicrafts easily accessible to a diverse audience. Furthermore, these women actively participate in various events such as Kisan Melas, conferences, and workshops organized by different organizations both within and outside the Union Territory. Their participation not only

showcases their craftsmanship but also provides them with opportunities to innovate and market their products effectively. The support extended by the Reasi district administration, JKRLM, KVK, and NABARD has been instrumental in facilitating these women in product innovation and market outreach. Through workshops and training sessions, these

organizations have helped the women refine their skills and expand their product range. Anita Devi, an award-winning artisan from Karua village, highlighted the transformation of grass-made handicrafts from mere household items to commercially viable products. She emphasized the infusion of new vitality into the craft by introducing innovative designs and diversifying product offerings. Dr. Banarsi Lal, Senior Scientist & Head of KVK, Reasi, underscored the eco-friendly nature of these handicrafts and their alignment with the "Vocal for Local" initiative. He advocated for further innovation to develop more varieties of products, thereby increasing market appeal and returns for the artisans. Adarsh Gupta from NABARD emphasized the potential of these handicrafts

in generating income and employment opportunities in the district. He acknowledged the declining interest among the younger generation but notes the renewed enthusiasm among rural women towards preserving and promoting this traditional art form. Yugal Kishore Sharma, the nodal officer of JKRLM, stressed the importance of income generation and women empowerment through entrepreneurial opportunities. He discussed strategies for branding, labeling, packaging, and marketing to enhance the visibility and marketability of these handicrafts. Overall, the revival of traditional handicrafts in Reasi district not only contributes to cultural preservation but also serves as a means of economic empowerment for rural women, fostering community development and sustainable livelihoods.

Bhandarwah Administration along with Bhandarwah Development Authority took the initiative to preserve nature by cleaning dirt and bio non-degradable waste from all the tourist destinations, which is being left dirty by the visitors & vendors. The week long campaign started with an awareness lecture by CEO BDA Bal Krishan at high altitude meadow in which beside officials of BDA, Administration, RDD, Revenue Department and Municipal Committee participated to motivate the vendors, tourists and visi-

# Religious function organised at Dera Sant Pura Nangali Sahib

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
**POONCH:** The religious function organized at Gurudwara Nangali Sahib in Poonch is a significant event that commemorates the death anniversary of Guru Mohar Singh Ji. Led by Sant Gurdip Singh under the guidance of Dera and Mahant Manjeet Singh, the event is meticulously organized and attended by a large number of devotees seeking spiritual solace and guidance. The ceremony began with the congregation gathering for a special Diwan, or congregational prayer. This Diwan serves as the focal point of the event, where devotees come together to pay



*Mahant Manjeet Singh ji reciting Gurbani at Gurudwara Nangali Sahib in Poonch.*

their respects and seek blessings. The atmosphere is imbued with a sense of reverence and devotion as participants engage in prayer and reflection. One of the central aspects of the event is the Kiran sessions, where devotional singing takes place. Skilled musicians and singers performed hymns

from the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of Sikhism, in honor of Sant Mohar Singh Ji's memory and his profound contributions to Sikh philosophy and spirituality. The Kiran sessions are deeply moving and serve to uplift the spirits of the devotees, fostering a sense of connection with the divine. Throughout the event, various religious rituals and ceremonies are conducted to pay homage to Guru Mohar Singh Ji and to reinforce the spiritual teachings and values espoused by Sikhism. These rituals serve as reminders of the importance of faith, compassion, and selfless service in the Sikh tradition. In addition to the spiritu-

al aspects, the event also provides an opportunity for devotees to come together in fellowship and camaraderie. It serves as a time for community bonding and solidarity, strengthening the ties that bind the Sikh community together. Gurudwara Nangali Sahib itself holds a special place in Sikh history. Established in 1803 by Thakur Bhai Mela Singh Ji, the fourth successor of Sant Bhai Feru Singh Ji, the Gurudwara has served as a beacon of faith and spirituality for generations of Sikhs. Its serene location by the Drungali Nallah adds to its allure, providing a tranquil setting for worship and contemplation.

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# NC-PDP no more advocating autonomy, self-rule in J&K: Zafar Manhas

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
**POONCH:** Apni Party Vice President, and Party's candidate from Rajouri - Anantnag Parliamentary seat, Zafar Iqbal Manhas on Sunday accused National Conference, and Peoples Democratic Party for promoting dynastic rule in Jammu and Kashmir by suppressing aspiration of the people of Pir Panjal and other parts of the erstwhile State. As a part of election campaign, Manhas addressed largely attended public meetings at Fazalabad as well as in Surankote, District Poonch of Jammu and Kashmir. Additional General Secretary of the Party, Arun Kumar Chibber



*Apni Party candidate from Rajouri - Anantnag Parliamentary seat, Zafar Iqbal Manhas addressing public meeting.*

among others were present in the public meeting. Speaking in front of the enthusiastic Party workers, and general masses, Manhas recalled how the NC and PDP compromised the democratic values to stay in power and misled the people by exploiting them emotionally in the name of autonomy and self-rule. He said that both these traditional regional parties have forgotten to promote their respective agenda of autonomy and self-rule in the ongoing elections because they know that they have been exposed and the people are not going to believe them anymore. He said that the NC lead-

"Both of these parties, NC, and PDP denied constitutional rights to the Pahari tribes for decades. These regional parties humiliated the leaders who raised their voice in favour of the Pahari tribe to keep their dynastic regime unchallenged in Jammu and Kashmir. However, the situation has changed now as the Pahari tribes have got their due constitutional rights," he stated. He held the politicians from NC and PDP responsible for terrorism in Pir Panjal region as well as in Kashmir that resulted in the killing of innocent people. He said that the NC lead-

ership shall be held accountable for their misdeeds from 1931 till date in Jammu and Kashmir. He said that the role of NC and PDP leaderships is questionable as they promoted instability in Pir Panjal, and parts of the valley in which innocent lives were lost. Exposing the double standard of the PDP leadership, he recalled how the PDP President had said that the people would not raise the national flag, if the special status is touched. "Contrary to the claim of their Party President, it was her PDP's Jammu Unit that hoisted the national flag at their office premises in the year 2020," he said. At the same time, the role of NC has continued to remain doubtful because it wanted to keep the dynastic regime intact while compromising the peace. Challenged the dynastic rule of NC and PDP, he said that these Parties have maintained silence over the killing of innocent youth in Kashmir valley during respective regimes. He said the people were

kept busy with divisive agenda so that they do not ask for basic amenities. "The Pir Panjal does not have railway link, proper road connectivity, and medical care. However, if I am voted to the Lok Sabha, I will leave no stone unturned to get a separate Parliamentary seat for Rajouri-Poonch, Hill Development Council, fast completion of the railway line to connect Jammu - Poonch, promotion of the tourism spots, exploration of new tourism sites to boost local economy and explore employment, stop migration of the people, construction of two tunnels i.e., Peer Ki Gali, and Dera Ke Gali on Mughal road, to provide basic amenities, and improve health and educational infrastructure," he said, while making a plea to the people vote and support him to the ongoing Lok Sabha elections. Expressing gratitude to the people for their support, he asked them to bring positive change for themselves and their future generation by casting their votes in his favour.

# Get united, no need to be proxies for any political party: SOS Int'l to PoJK refugees

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
**NOWSHERA:** The SOS International, a prominent organization advocating for the rights of displaced persons from Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK), has strongly criticized the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for its alleged silence on the legitimate issues concerning PoJK refugees. In a fervent appeal, the organization urged PoJK displaced persons not to align themselves as proxies for any political party and emphasized their potential to influence electoral outcomes in upcoming elections in Jammu and Kashmir. The chairman of SOS International, Rajiv Chuni, addressed a mass awareness rally in Nowshera town, which was attended by a large number of PoJK refugees. Chuni highlighted the continued neglect of PoJK displaced persons by political parties, for failing to address their grievances and fulfill promises made to the community. Chuni expressed concerns over the unfulfilled promises made by the BJP, citing examples such as the abrupt cessation of a promised relief package and the failure to address



*Chairman of SOS International, Rajiv Chuni addressing mass awareness rally in Nowshera.*

land rights and employment opportunities for PoJK refugees. He emphasized that the BJP, which had previously enjoyed significant support from the PoJK community in Rajouri and Poonch districts, had now neglected their issues. He emphasized the need for the PoJK community to unite and assert their influence through strategic voting, urging them to vote unanimously for a single party that prioritizes their interests. Chuni stressed the importance of political empowerment for the PoJK community, citing past recommendations for reserved seats in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. Chuni reiterated the community's demand for support from political parties that openly advocate for their cause and announced relief packages. He emphasized that the

PoJK community's support would be contingent on politicians committing to protecting their interests and addressing their issues. Expressing frustration with the current political discourse, Chuni declared that the PoJK community would no longer tolerate being used as proxies by political parties. He called for unity and warned against deception, asserting that the community would communicate its decisions through various social media platforms. Several other individuals, including V K Datta, Ved Raj Bali, Jagjit Singh, Daleep Chib, and Satinder Dev Gupta, also addressed the meeting, emphasizing the importance of unity and collective action among PoJK refugees to ensure their rights and interests are safeguarded in the political arena.

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